

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as currently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6 and 8-12 are presently pending in this application, Claim 1 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-6 and 8-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeuchi (U.S. Patent 3,991,254) in view of Iseli et al. (U.S. Patent 4,503,128) and Clough et al. (U.S. Patent 5,326,633), and further in view of Lange et al. (U.S. Patent 4,166,147); and alternatively, Claims 1-6 and 8-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeuchi in view of Iseli et al. and Clough et al., and further in view of Lange et al. as evidenced by JP 06-239656 (hereinafter “JP ‘656”).

First, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the courtesy of a personal interview granted to Applicants’ representative on December 10, 2008. During the interview, the outstanding issues were discussed, and arguments in support of the claims were presented. These discussions are reiterated and supplemented below.

Based on the discussions held during the interview, Claim 1 has been amended to recite: “a porous ceramic carrier having a partition wall portion and a plurality of through-holes, the through-holes extending in a longitudinal direction of the porous ceramic carrier, the partition wall portion partitioning the through-holes and being configured to filter particulates in an exhaust gas; and a catalyst coat layer provided in the partition wall portion of the porous ceramic carrier and comprising at least one oxide ceramic and a catalyst active component, the catalyst coat layer further comprising a first substance having a thermal conductivity higher than the oxide ceramic, a second substance having a refractive index larger than a refractive index of the oxide ceramic, or a colored pigment, wherein the porous

ceramic carrier has a porosity of 40-80% and a thermal conductivity of a filter body comprising the porous ceramic carrier and the catalyst coat layer is set to be 0.3-60 W/mk” for further clarification. This amendment is believed to find clear support in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed, and no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually agreeable claim language.

As discussed during the interview, Takeuchi is directed to an *insulating structure* and describes an insulating layer (c) disposed in a space formed between the inner wall and outer wall of a double structure such as one formed by an outer container encasing a catalyst device. Thus, the insulating layer (c) in Takeuchi clearly does not receive an exhaust gas as in the through-holes extending in the longitudinal direction of a porous ceramic carrier, nor does it partitions the through-holes and filters particulates in the exhaust gas permeating from the through holes. As such, Takeuchi fails to disclose or suggest a catalyst coat layer provided in such a partition wall portion. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Takeuchi fails to teach or suggest “a catalyst coat layer provided in the partition wall portion [i.e., “a partition wall portion … partitioning the through-holes and being configured to filter particulates in an exhaust gas”] of the porous ceramic carrier and comprising at least one oxide ceramic and a catalyst active component, the catalyst coat layer further comprising a first substance having a thermal conductivity higher than the oxide ceramic, a second substance having a refractive index larger than a refractive index of the oxide ceramic, or a colored pigment, wherein the porous ceramic carrier has a porosity of 40-80% and a thermal conductivity of a filter body comprising the porous ceramic carrier and the catalyst coat layer is set to be 0.3-60 W/mk” as recited in Claim 1.

As discussed in the previous response, Iseli et al. and Clough et al. being directed to a thermally sprayable ceramic and a coated substrate, Iseli et al. simply describes a method in

which a cordierite is thermally spayed by flame or plasma onto certain components to withstand mechanical, thermal and abrasive conditions and Clough et al. merely describes coating a substrate such as SiC and cordierite with tin oxide. Moreover, according to Iseli et al., the coating provides a porosity of only up to 40 volume %, which is believed to be still too low for a filter. Finally, Lange et al. is directed to a shaped and fired TiO₂ article and cited to show “a titania sol with iron oxide as a pigment.”

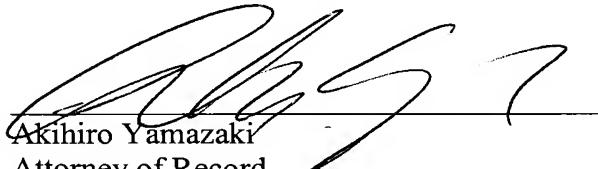
Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter recited in amended Claim 1 is clearly distinguishable over Takeuchi, Iseli et al., Clough et al., Lange et el. and JP ‘656, and because Takeuchi, Iseli et al., Clough et al., Lange et el. and JP ‘656 fail to disclose the catalyst layer as recited in amended Claim 1, their teachings even in combination are not believed to render the filter recited in Claim 1 obvious.

Since Claims 2-6 and 8-12 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 2-6 and 8-12 are believed to be allowable as well.

In view of the amendment and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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